



THE BOURGEOIS WEDDING.

A TALE.

A wedding in the middle and humbler classes of society in France is a very different thing from a wedding in England. The double ceremony before the *maire* and in church takes place early in the morning or in the afternoon. This over, in most cases the whole wedding party adjourn to some celebrated house outside the barrier, where they sit down to dinner about six, to rise about eleven. The dancing begins continuing in most cases until six o'clock in the morning. The visitors then go away to take a little rest, meeting again at dinner-time and dancing once more all night. Sometimes there is a third night, but in general reasonable people are contented with two; while those who aim at something a little above the ordinary run of middle class society, actually stop at one.

Hector Rubinet was an ironmonger in a large way of business in the Rue St. Denis, an elector, and he was proud to say, very nearly eligible to the deputation. Young, rich, and tolerably good looking, he was the admiration of all the papas and mammas, with marriageable daughters, in the quarter. But, like most of his class, Hector was for some time not at all inclined to yield up his liberty too readily. Not that a French husband enjoys much less liberty when married than before; but the class which has grown rich and powerful since 1789—the citizen or bourgeois class—appear far more under the influence of their wives than the humbler or more elevated classes. I think this may be easily explained. The middle classes are in general, though great grumblers, rich, contented, and happy. They naturally, then, like ease and tranquillity, and married men in general seem to agree that submission to the gentle influence of the female head of the family is the surest mode of obtaining this desirable state of affairs. I have often remarked myself, in this city, called in France the capital of Europe, that if you want a specimen of the genius familiarly known as 'a brute of a husband,' you must look for him among the speculative, reckless traders, who, with little credit and less capital, try to fight the battle of life. He it is that rules his home with an iron rod, and has a meek, trembling, submissive wife, who never differs from him in opinion until the day when a reasonable chance of separation offers. To my ideas, this speaks volumes in favor of that phase of matrimony where at all events the wife enters heartily into the counsels of the family, and has at least her proportionate share of influence in its government.

Hector Rubinet was, however, of a different opinion. His idea of matrimony was severe. He wanted a wife who would yield to him in all things, have no will of her own, and never even venture to differ from him in opinion. From twenty to thirty he vainly sought the object of his wishes. He found plenty of young ladies who were as gentle as lambs—who looked models of excellence—whose very tone seemed to promise all he could desire; but Hector was a physiognomist, and ever found some alarming symptoms in the fair and youthful aspirants of matrimonial honors around him. One had an eye which spoke volumes of energy; another had a mouth with an authoritative curl; another had a determined chin, while the fourth had an independent wave about her hair which looked serious. In their way of sitting, walking, dancing, Hector could find some sign of incipient rebellion against the sovereignty of man;—and at last it was agreed in the neighborhood that he would settle down into an old bachelor, and leave all his disposable cash in some eccentric English way.

One day, however, at a small party given by a solitary married couple of the Rue Rambuteau, the eye of Hector fell upon a damsel, quite a stranger to him, who drew his attention at once. She was about five-and-twenty, fair, with a white, clear complexion, and a tendency to embonpoint, which of itself was promising. Athalie Poussinque had, moreover, a soft, sleepy eye, a full mouth, a slow, methodical pace, a plain way of wearing her hair. He made inquiries. She had no fortune; she was a poor relation, placed under the protection of Mme. Dubois, at whose house he met her, and appeared, in fact, the most likely person in the world to be a submissive and obedient wife.

The wedding was fixed the very next day.—Dine was the consternation in several families, who had made up their minds to Hector not marrying, and looked upon him as a future generous old bachelor, who would make presents to the children, be useful and liberal at weddings, be constant in his distribution of gifts on New Year's day—in fact, who would spend his money in a way satisfactory to the feelings of his family in general. But now this hope was gone. Hector was going to marry, would have children of his own, a wife to dress, &c.; and their visions vanished. Still all who were invited went to the wedding. It was a splendid affair. Hector had spared no expense with the *cravat* of his future wife; he had been liberal, even generous, and she looked so quietly beautiful and happy in her white satin dress, wreath of roses, and rich blonde veil, that all gave an involuntary measure of praise to his good taste. She had near her a beauty of another kind. This one was about seventeen—a very child in form and expression, and yet exquisitely lovely. Her hair waved, however, in silken ringlets over her shoulders; her eye, though mild, was full of latent fire; and her *gaze* laughingly exposed white and pink

teeth, which made Hector shudder with terror at the bare idea of his having selected such a wife. She came with Hector's cousin, Mme. St. Clair, a schoolmistress, who had brought her up from childhood, and who treated her as a visitor rather than a boarder, the young lady being an orphan under the guardianship of an only brother.

The marriage took place at the parish church, and then the whole party adjourned to a celebrated restaurant outside the Barriere de l'Étoile, in the avenue de Neuilly. Dinner had been ordered for six o'clock, and in the meantime the party wandered in the fields behind the house, each lady taking the arm of a gentleman. Hector proposed a walk as far as the Bois de Boulogne.

'No,' said his wife very quietly; 'it is too far, and will fatigue us before we begin to dance. I am going to sit down upon the grass.'

Hector gave a look of wild astonishment at his meek and submissive partner, but she appeared not to notice it, sitting down on the grass amid a regular titter from the whole company. Hector Rubinet said nothing; he recollected that it was his wedding day, and that at all events he could not venture upon showing authority upon such an occasion. Nothing further occurred to mar the happiness of the hour, and six o'clock soon came round, with its splendid dinner, its abundant wine, its laughter and merriment. As usual the banquet was kept up until a late hour, and it was eleven o'clock when the tables were cleared away for the first quadrille.

About an hour later, while the music was sounding merrily, and Hector Rubinet was resting after a polka, breathing the fresh air with his wife at the open window, an elegant cab drew up at the door. It contained a young man and a little groom stood behind. The young man did not get out; he appeared simply listening to the music. Hector Rubinet at once recognized him, as one of the habitual visitors at Neuilly Palace—Charles de Monsigny—a favorite companion of the Duke of Orleans. He was a dissipated young man who had already almost grown weary of life, or rather who had ceased to find the least zest or excitement in a continual round of pleasures. He had that evening played whist with the royal circle, and was returning to Paris to sup at the Café de Paris with some of his own set.

Hector Rubinet darted across the room, down the stairs, into the street. Charles de Monsigny was the son of the landlord on whose estate Hector had been born; they had been playmates together, and Charles had never forgotten their early friendship.

'M. le Count,' he said, almost out of breath, 'I had the honor to recognise you. I did not venture to send you a formal invitation; but you are here, I hope you will favor?'—
'And so, my poor Hector,' replied the young man, leaping out of his cabriolet, 'we are getting married! What can have driven us to so desperate a resolve?'—
'Ah, monsieur, you are always satirical! But I have found a model of a wife. I shall have the honor to introduce you to her. She is, added he in a whisper, 'everything I could wish—knows no will but mine, and will scarcely speak unless I give her a tacit leave.'

'You are very happy, my dear Hector,' continued Charles in a tone of half-affection, half-sarcasm; that is to say, if one can ever call a married man happy. 'I am so happy to have had this chance of meeting with you. I did not catch your name the other evening, or I should have called and thanked you for the pleasure I enjoyed in your society.'

The young girl smiled, and looked at Mme. St. Clair. 'We shall be happy to see you,' said she handing her card to the count, 'any Thursday evening when you are disengaged.'

'I am very proud of the honor you do us,' she said, bowing, 'and I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you at our country-house.'

'Our country-house!' stammered Hector, avoiding the eyes of his aristocratic friend. 'My dear,' replied Athalie, in a firm and resolute tone, 'I assure you we must have a country-house. I have been brought up in the country, and could not habitually sleep in the dense air of the Rue St. Denis.'

'I highly approve madame's taste,' said Charles, gravely, 'and shall be most happy to meet you in your rural retreat. I like to see conjugal happiness, though not a marrying man myself.'

Hector made no reply; he was completely overcome. He scarcely yielded to despair. There was in his heart no power of resisting the quiet, positive way of his young wife. The dancing at this moment ceased, and Athalie, taking the Count's arm, moved to walk round the room. As she did so, she caught a meaningful look exchanged between the friends.

'Are you fond of dancing?' said the count in a patronising tone. 'Yes, monsieur, very fond; all girls at my age are; but I never dance with pleasure at a wedding. I know not why—it seems too serious an affair to be treated so lightly.'

'I admire your taste,' replied the count; who was, however, absolutely petrified at such an observation from a young girl.

'You seem surprised, however,' she continued. 'But I am not in the habit of consulting my own wishes. Mme. St. Clair wished me to come, and I came.'

Charles now unhesitatingly opened a serious conversation with his young companion. He spoke of music, the fine arts, poetry, even of politics, and found that on all these topics he had met his master. The young girl had evidently been wholly devoted to study from her infancy, and had profited largely by her reading and thinking. The young man was equally surprised and pleased; so much so, that for the evening he devoted himself exclusively to her, and towards morning became so fascinated that in low, whispered tones he made a solemn declaration to love, and said, that could he find worthy of such a wife, he would be happy to set aside all his prejudices, and marry. The young girl made him some jocular reply, and then rose, just as the party broke up, to join Mme. St. Clair.

Next day Charles had not forgotten the passion of the previous evening; but he no longer felt under the influence of the feelings which had made him speak so plainly. He certainly recollected all her many perfections of person and character, and thought that had she been one of his own class, he would certainly have been tempted to follow up the acquaintance so auspiciously commenced. But she was a little bourgeois, and he did not even know her name. He therefore resolved to think no more of her, but to make up his mind to the fact, and he had spent a very pleasant evening, quite sure that he would be as easily forgotten as he himself would forget. He pursued his usual pleasures—went to the Opera, played billiards, lounged away his existence, and tried to persuade himself that he was far happier than if he had created a happy home, and sought a good and affectionate wife.

About a month later, he was driving up the Champs Elysees, with a pair of horses and a phaeton, when his eyes caught sight of the young girl, walking amid the fashionable crowd on the Boulevard, arm-in-arm with Mme. St. Clair. She was very pale and thoughtful, he perceived, and his heart smote him. It might be through his inconsiderate conduct the other evening. He pulled in his horses, threw the reins to a servant, and hurried towards them. His quick glance caught that of the young girl, who colored violently and seemed about to pass. 'Ah, Mademoiselle!' he cried, in a tone of genuine delight, 'I am so happy to have had this chance of meeting with you. I did not catch your name the other evening, or I should have called and thanked you for the pleasure I enjoyed in your society.'

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ceived with such evident pleasure, that this was quite plain. He plunged once more into the turmoil of the world—played, danced, joined champagne suppers, and did every thing which could banish thought and deaden feeling. All was in vain, but though he could not resist, he had no intention of surrendering. He thought of travel, and one morning rose early with a view to making the necessary preparations. He sat at breakfast in deep thought. At length he took up his pen, and hastily dashed off a letter, which he sent to be put in the post by one of his servants.

This done, he seemed easier in his mind. But still there was an air of restless impatience about him, as if he expected some one or something. At last he took a book, called for a Turkish hookah, and sat down to try and calm himself with reading and smoking. Again it proved a vain attempt; when, just as his patience was at an end, a servant entered and announced a visitor—Captain Edgar Senincourt-Warville, a young noble who had sought distinction in Africa in the service of the new dynasty.

'Ah, Edgar, my good friend,' said he, rising, 'you come in the very nick of time. I was as dull as a mummy. But what is the matter? You look more like an angry lion than a good-natured friend who has called in to pass a friendly hour.'

'Monsieur, I come here on grave and solemn business. I come to ask an account of the life and honor of my only sister, Adèle de Senincourt-Warville.'

'My dear fellow, what mean you? Your sister?—I never saw her.'

'When you met my sister at the wedding of M. Hector Rubinet, where she had very improperly been taken by Mme. St. Clair, you amused yourself all the evening by paying attention to her, and before morning you made a declaration which the poor child took in earnest.'

'Ha! and she was your sister?' cried Charles, looking the picture of blank surprise. 'She was; but had she been the *veriest petite bourgeois* of the Rue Frodanteau, she merited more honorable treatment at your hands. Quite inexperienced in the world's ways, she went home to think over your words, and repeat them to Mme. St. Clair, who, supposing you knew her rank, encouraged her to think of you as one who might become her suitor in earnest. But you came not!'

'I knew neither her name nor address.'

'You could have obtained both from M. Rubinet,' continued the captain severely, 'but I pass that. You met them; you ran to meet them; made excuses for your apparent neglect; took them a drive; talked for three hours to my sister, and at parting said: "I shall ask you next Thursday to decide the happiness of my life."

'She told you that?' said Charles musing. 'She told me nothing. When the evening passed without your coming, the poor child, overcome by disappointment, wounded pride, and grief, told it in a passionate burst of tears to Mme. St. Clair, who repeated it all to me, when I asked for an explanation of her pallor and lowness of spirits. And now, monsieur, that I have told you of my sister's weakness, remains but for me to put it out of your power for ever to boast of your facile conquest.'

'I honest!' cried Charles indignantly. 'You allowed others to talk to you in a way to justify the supposition.'

'I will allow, Edgar, that I have been very wrong,' began the count, calmly; 'but if you will listen to me—'

'No, I will not listen! I might be influenced by your forked tongue. I dare say, now you find that she is Adèle de Senincourt-Warville, and she is quite willing to apologise and offer your hand!'

'Nay, listen to me, I beg,' cried Charles, whose anger was rising. 'You are mistaken—grossly mistaken.'

'Must I call you coward?' said Edgar, stamping his foot on the floor of the room.

'This passes the bounds,' exclaimed the count in reply. 'To-morrow morning at break of day, our seconds will arrange the details. Good afternoon.'

'Good afternoon, until we say good morning,' replied the angry captain, and he left the room. Charles de Monsigny was now in a violent passion. The word coward had roused him to madness, and he thought only of avenging the insult by committing one of the greatest crimes of which a reasoning being can be guilty. He, however, soon grew calm, went out to dinner, looked in at the Opera, and then, requesting his second to be with him at dawn of day, returned home, and retired to bed.

It was a bright, clear morning, the sun had just risen, the birds sang amid the trees of the Bois de Boulogne, as Charles and his second drove up to the rendezvous. A few moments elapsed, and their adversaries appeared in sight. A few moments more, and four men were crowded in an open glade in the wood, where they had met for the express purpose of committing one or more murders, as the case might be. Edgar and Charles spoke not a word; their brows were knit angrily, and while their seconds measured the ground and loaded the pistols, they stood apart. Presently all was ready, and they were about to advance to their places, when, by a great effort, Charles forced himself to speak. 'Gentlemen,' said he, gravely, 'I beg you to bear witness to the fact, that I fight this duel with M. Warville entirely against my own feelings and wishes. He is acting under a wrong impression, relative to what I can now offer no explanation.'

'Sir, to your place!' replied Edgar furiously; 'your life, or mine!'

'And mine!' cried Adèle, advancing from the cover of the wood, and laying her hand upon her brother's arm—if I have not come in time to prevent an assassination.'

'Leave us, I command you!' said Edgar. 'No, I will not, until you have pledged yourself not to take the life of my future husband.'

'Your future husband!' said Edgar, wildly. 'Yes, monsieur, you force me, by your force and savage humor, to accept him thus hurriedly,' replied Adèle, blushing, but still looking him calmly in the face, 'that is to say, if you, my natural guardian, approve of this request made for the hand of the *petite bourgeois*.'

'O Adèle, how generous, how kind!' cried Charles, advancing, and casting his pistol to the ground.

'Will you read this letter,' continued Adèle, handing him a paper, 'which we received about ten minutes after you left us yesterday in a towering passion!'

The captain took the letter. It was as follows:—

'MADAME—I have to apologise very humbly for my unpolite behavior towards yourself and your charming ward. On two occasions, when I had the honor of seeing you, I expressed a wish that we should meet again, and, after receiving permission, did not avail myself of it. It is not possible now for me to seek to renew the acquaintance without some explanation. I frankly own, that having been very much struck on the first occasion by your ward, and on the second having conceived for her a warm and sincere affection, I have from mere pride contended against the feeling as long as I could. To marry into the *bourgeoisie* is in my family an unpardonable crime, and it is on account of this prejudice that I have acted with such want of delicacy. But I am sure your young ward is as good and generous as she is beautiful, and I rely fully on her forgiving me who seeks his pardon in a penitent spirit, and who frankly owns his folly. I dare say the young lady has severely noticed my conduct, it being naturally enough matter of little importance to her. But her forgiveness is necessary to the relief of my mind. I pray you, therefore, both to excuse my brutality, and to allow me to visit your house as the suitor of your ward. I beg to address to you at once a formal suit for her hand, hoping you will do your utmost to induce her to receive my advances favorably. I have the honor to be, with the most distinguished consideration, your very devoted

CHARLES DE MONSIGNY.'

'But the duel!' asked Edgar.

'That project I betrayed,' said Mme St. Clair, who had reached the side of Adèle while Edgar was reading the letter. 'When this letter came, I at once owned that you were gone to chase long time; but we feared to fail in our attempt, if we came not hither. We did not go to bed, but watched all night near the count's house in a carriage—you had not given your address—and we drove here after you all.'

'Charles, my friend,' said Edgar, offering his hand, 'will you forgive my hastiness? I now understand the explanations you had to give.'

'If you had not roused my anger I should have told you of the letter.'

'And so, because your temper was roused, you were going to kill my brother, were you, monsieur!'

'My dear Adèle,' said the count, taking both her hand and that of her brother, 'we have been very wrong, but you must forgive us. Gentlemen, I am of opinion that we should all adjourn without further delay to the best restaurant at hand, and sign the treaty of peace over a solemn breakfast—one of our old ones, Edgar, of the Rue Lafayette.'

'With pleasure,' replied Edgar, laughing; and the sooner I see the wedding-breakfast the better. I find taking care of young ladies troublesome work, and shall be very willing to transfer the responsibility to other hands.'

'My dear brother-in-law,' cried Charles in the same tone, though with a look of deep feeling, 'I accept the responsibility with delight, and only wish it could be assumed to-morrow.'

'M. le Count is in a great hurry as he was to come to our Thursdays,' said the little Adèle, maliciously.

The count defended himself as best he could, and thus the conversation continued during the whole morning.

The marriage took place within a day of the delay required by the legal formalities. M. and Mme. Hector Rubinet were among the guests invited to the wedding breakfast. Both then and even after, the contrast between the couples was marked. Hector sank from the day of his marriage into a complete monotony. His wife ruled him without his ever venturing a murmur, and he found his advantage in it. Having everything in her hands, she took care of his fortune, and spent money freely, but wasted nothing. Hector tried once or twice to launch into speculations, but his wife stopped him, and his children doted on the benefit. With all his assumed knowledge of mankind, Hector was the most easily gulled man in the world. Before this marriage he had lost several large sums by putting faith in plausible flatterers. Charles, on the other hand, always enjoyed the proud satisfaction of being looked up to by his young wife with love and respect; but then he deserved to be so, and every day of his life he blossoms the night when he dropped in to see the Bonapartes.

A Balloon Journey of two Stages.

A recent number of the *Revue de deux Mondes* contains an interesting letter from Mr. Ivan Matzloff, a Russian gentleman, describing a journey made by him last summer, in a balloon. The expedition was on the whole a successful one, and while it lasted longer than is usual in similar expeditions, the traveller retained his presence of mind and has recorded his experience in a very pleasant manner. We translate the principle part of his letter, describing his aerial voyage, from the *Revue*.

'I had read with an eager curiosity the recital of the ascensions of Messrs Gay Lussac, Blanchard, and particularly that of the Duke of Brunswick in company with the celebrated Green—their bold attempts seduced my mind. I was tormented with the desire to follow their traces, and to carry an excursion into the air higher and farther than had yet been attempted. In vain did the importance of the ties which attached me to this lower world contend with the rashness of such an ambition. My fancy became a fixed idea. Everybody about me, too, talked of an ascension as of a journey to Fontenbleau—there was nothing in it more than a party of pleasure. Finally a direct proposition was made to me, upon irresistible conditions. I hesitated no longer, and on the 5th of June, at seventeen past five in the evening, having provided myself with all the instruments proper to give my observations some scientific interest, I entered the balloon Eagle, which was to ascend under the direction of M. Godard. My companions were the Countess S.S., Count Alexis Pomeroy and one of his friends.

We were radiant with gaiety on quitting the earth. Not one of us felt the beatings of his heart quickened. No one thought of danger, and really the state of the atmosphere, the solidity of the apparatus, and the experience of our guides left little room for inquietude. We remained for a long time over Paris, admiring the magnificent panorama of the great city and its environs. Leaning on the border of the boat of the balloon, as on a balcony, we fully enjoyed this magnificent spectacle which was not concealed by a single cloud, and our eyes were never weary of the view. This prodigious mass of houses, solitary or in groups, fields with colors so diverse, divided by water courses, roads, railways, making capricious circuits like the alley of a park, columns of smoke, the sound of bells, the thousand human noises confounded together, then the silence and the continued development of the immense picture which incessantly was enrolled and enlarged. All this enchanted our eyes and threw our minds into a profound reverie. Looking from such a height on human things, life becomes more insignificant, and nature more grand; we feel recalled to earth by the instinct of preservation, but still more powerful is the attraction towards Heaven.

These impressions were at first less lively. On a journey, the first hour is not the hour of meditation. Gay speeches, the most foolish exclamations were bandied from one to another, we recognized and named with transport the places over which the balloon passed, we still belonged to the earth. The serenity of our agreeable companion, the Countess, banished anxious thoughts, perhaps also with the intention of discovering whether our gay recklessness did not hide some secret anxiety, she amused herself by surprising us with some dangerous jokes—sometimes her infantile foot would give to the car a sudden shock, followed by a capricious oscillation, sometimes she leaned over the edge, defying the gulf and seriously endangering our equilibrium. Finally yielding to the respectful injunctions of the company, she consented to renounce her experiments. Reassured on this side, we entered into a discussion on the possibility of directing balloons. It seemed to us impossible that the point of rendering these locomotives of gunmetal sickle and manageable, should not be reached sooner or later. The most ingenious, as well as the most singular ideas were given out, all systems were analysed. But a more pressing interest cut short these problems, we must dine. This necessity had been foreseen. In an instant we were installed in our other cabinet as comfortably as in one of the saloons of the *Freres Provençaux*. Corks leapt gaily into the air, and soon animation increased with the shock of the glasses, every one translated freely his dearest thought.

'To his majesty the Emperor of all the Russias,' cried I.

'To Henry Vth,' cried M. de Pomeroy. 'We were so near the clouds at that moment, that the republic could not hear us. Besides, in these regions, so near the stars, the heart opens to all ebullitions of feeling, the imagination to all hopes. As to me, thank God, no regret, no constraint could mingle with my words, and my toast had been the echo of an invariable and unanimous cry, the national cry of Russia.'

The night surprised us in the midst of these effusions. The motion of the balloon was almost insensible, and more gentle than that of a boat sailing with the current. No one felt vertigo or uneasiness, a perfect state of quiet pervaded our senses. We all desired to continue our voyage, but it was prudent to secure before night a lodging in the proximity of a railway.

We began then the descending manoeuvres, and slowly approached the earth. I can never describe the delicious sensation of this moment, the calm of nature filled us with an unknown pleasure, silence had taken the place of enthusiasm and gaiety. We mused much, words

failed us, but each of us internally chanted the poem. As we approached the earth, the great lines of the landscape became better defined, and different objects appeared one by one, in heaven and on earth, half lighted by the twilight. By degrees we distinguished hills, woods and belfries and houses; we counted the trees in haunts. The sounds which we had lost became again perceptible to our ears, a distant bell was ringing, a wagon was rolling painfully over the stones, a horse neighed. Clearer yet heard the murmur of the streams, finally the sound of the human voice. It was the friendly welcome of a peasant. A cord of a hundred and fifty metres, thrown out by M. Godard, was seized by some laborers, who brought us, without any shock, to the middle of a field near Bussy le Long.

This return to the earth will remain one of the most agreeable and poetical remembrances of my life. It was accomplished under very favorable conditions, for we were only a league from Soissons, and we could easily gain that city by causing ourselves to be drawn by long cords, which in the manner boats are moved on canals. We put foot on earth and thanked the inhabitants of the country who had run in haste, lavishing upon us their offers of services. After an hour passed in answering their simple questions which were addressed to us, we returned to our own car. It was completely dark. Some peasants drew us by cables and towed us to the gates of the city, where I descended at half past eleven. I entered a guard house, the soldiers were not a little surprised at the request I made them to put up our balloon. They directed me to address myself to the commandant of the place to obtain leave to enter the city. We did not wait for this permission. I seized the cord which floated from the point of our machine, and the captive balloon entered Soissons in triumph, passed over the fortifications. The population was asleep, but the noise we made in catching upon chimneys may have disturbed the Soissonais, who were little accustomed to such visits. The balloon once established in the Place d'Armes, and confined to the care of the younger Mr. Godard, the injuries to the chimneys paid for at last, we established ourselves at a hotel enjoying the solidity of the earth, and the liberty of our movements.

Meantime the project of a second departure was agitated. We should all have wished to be of the party, but Mr. Godard declared that he could only take in a single passenger, for the balloon had lost considerably its power of ascension, in consequence of the humidity of the atmosphere. My companions yielding to me their rights, went in search of a carriage to take them to the railway, while I wrote to my wife at Moscow and to my friends at Paris. This new ascension in the middle of the night was not, I confess without a certain solemnity. We could not conceal from ourselves the danger. It is in fact understood that in a long journey all the rigging of a frail machine where the weight and market deterioration, and needs to be carefully readjusted and consolidated before being again put to service. At the same time the gas having become more rarified and diminished in volume escapes insensibly through the distended seams and the silk the varnish of which has become more or less injured. Prudence then indicated a return to Paris by land as the wisest part to take. Nevertheless, seduced by the idea of accomplishing something which had never before been attempted, encouraged by the calmness and good humor of our comrades, I pressed the hands of my companions, I provided myself with some provisions and gaily entered the clouds at seven minutes past three in the morning to anticipate the sun at his rising. A numerous crowd attracted by the morning annunciation of our presence crowded around the balloon. The under prefect, the authorities, my companions from whom I parted, formed with the groups of persons attracted by curiosity, a sympathetic public whose wishes and acclamations saluted our departure.

The balloon ascended very slowly, and then descended again and grazed the roofs. I thought we might renew the damages of the night before, when seeing Mr. Godard throw out some plaster which served as ballast, I did the same on my side to lighten the car more rapidly, and without warning him of the spontaneous assistance I was giving him. My companions, who remained behind, had predicted that we should not lose sight of Soissons, so much did the drunk up balloon appear to want gas, they waited for me perhaps to rally me on my check, but we did so well that suddenly the Eagle, worthy of its name, rose free from anxiety I cast my eyes down to the earth. A thick fog enveloped the city, and on the square from which we had just risen, I distinguished nothing but a confused mass, where in which some movable points indicated only the presence of the numerous witnesses of our departure. Soon another spectacle attracted our attention. The day was beginning to break, and a bright light glauced from the horizon, and the sun appeared. I shall not attempt to paint the picture. The pen of a great poet could alone give an idea of it to those who have never seen the sun rise from the height at which I then found myself. My God—how glorious it was!

The panorama was magnificent on the south and south side, the earth on the east was covered with fog. Sometimes the mist was very portable, sometimes we suffered from the cold, from which I could hardly protect myself by my fur, while the sun burned on the east.

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